



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Center for Mental Health Services
www.samhsa.gov

MODULE III

**Making Help Accessible to
Students and Families**



MODULE III: OVERVIEW FOR TRAINERS

In this module you will guide participants through steps to take to help a student with mental health needs. Using a case study (Juanita's Story), participants will form an action plan, including:

- Identifying local resources
- Voicing concern/asking for help
- Following up

The first section of the module is devoted to identifying local resources. Participants will divide into small groups to brainstorm about resources in their own building and district with help from two handouts, a list of potential partners and a worksheet. They will then read the first part of Juanita's Story and, again in small groups, talk about what actions they would take if they had a student like Juanita. Next, they will read the rest of the case study to learn what steps Juanita's teacher took. Discussion of these steps leads into a discussion on which local resources would be the most helpful and how they could be accessed. A final section delineates confidentiality issues.

MODULE III: MAKING HELP ACCESSIBLE TO STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

CONTENTS

Module Goal	Page 3
Module Objectives	Page 3
Trainer’s Outline	Page 4
Trainer Preparation Notes	Page 7
Slides	Page 9
Slide III-A	Goal
Slide III-B	Objectives
Slide III-C	Action Plan
Slide III-D	Confidentiality
Handouts	Page 14
Handout III-A	Action Plan
Handout III-B	Worksheet: Toward Capacity Building
Handout III-C	Potential Partners
Handout III-D	Juanita’s Story
Evaluation	Page 20

MODULE III: GOAL

The goal of Module III is to help teachers break down barriers to learning by formulating a plan to assist students with mental health needs.

MODULE III: OBJECTIVES

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- List a number of internal resources and external partnerships available to support teachers, students, and families;
- Understand how to access those resources and partnerships;
- Identify the elements of a successful action plan to help students with mental health needs; and
- Describe the appropriate limits of educators' roles with regard to outside involvement and confidentiality.

MODULE III: TRAINER'S OUTLINE

III-1 Introduction

- A. Remind participants that the overall purpose of the training is to help eliminate barriers to learning by understanding and addressing mental health issues in the school environment.
- B. Show Slides III-A (Goal) and III-B (Objectives).
- C. Give overview of the module (*Trainer Note III-1*).

SLIDE III-A
SLIDE III-B

III-2 Action Plan: Know What Resources Are Available

- A. Show Slide III-C and refer to corresponding Handout III-A (Action Plan). Explain that you will be moving through the action plan step by step, starting with the first item, "Know What Resources Are Available."
- B. Divide the participants into small groups of three or four. Ask them to use Handout III-B (Worksheet: Toward Capacity Building) to brainstorm about resources in their own building and district (*Trainer Note III-2*). Suggest most relevant resources from Handout III-C (Potential Partners) for help in brainstorming. For each resource, have participants answer:
 - What needs does the resource meet for students, families, and/or staff?
 - When does it make sense to access the resource?
 - How would an educator access the resource?
- C. Reconvene and pool groups' suggestions. Write them on a flipchart or chalkboard.

SLIDE III-C
HANDOUT III-A

HANDOUT III-B

HANDOUT III-C

MODULE III: TRAINER'S OUTLINE (CONTINUED)

III-3 Action Plan: Voice Your Concern

- A. Note that you are moving on to the second stage of the action plan, "Voice Your Concern/Ask For Help."
- B. Refer to Handout III-D (Juanita's Story) and allow time for participants to read Part I.
- C. Ask participants to form the same small groups to discuss the case study and decide:
 - How would they work with Juanita after she disclosed that she had bipolar disorder?
 - What would be their next step within the classroom?
 - Would they try to involve a school social worker or other pupil services professional at this point?
- D. Reconvene and discuss answers. Use answers to the final question to lead into the next stage of the action plan, "Follow Up."

HANDOUT III-D

III-4 Action Plan: Follow Up

- A. Refer to Handout III-D (Juanita's Story) and allow time for participants to read Part II.
- B. Focus attention on the section describing Mrs. Farrell's contact with Juanita's parents. Ask participants:
 - Was this an effective way to involve parents?
 - Are there other ways, either teacher- or school-based, to involve Juanita's parents?
- C. Ask the group what next steps they might take if Juanita were their student. Use resources listed on flipchart or chalkboard as possibilities. Summarize and facilitate consensus on which resources might be the most helpful and how participants would access those resources.

HANDOUT III-D

MODULE III: TRAINER'S OUTLINE (CONTINUED)

- D. Stress the importance of continued involvement, even after the initial referral has been made or the initial resources accessed. Discuss ways in which an educator could remain actively involved with Juanita's care within the scope of local policies (*Trainer Note III-4*).

III-5 Confidentiality and the Limits of Educator Involvement

- A. Show Slide III-D (Confidentiality).
- B. Make the following points (*Trainer Note III-5*):
- When in doubt, treat information as if it is confidential unless the information violates the limits of confidentiality.
 - The limits of confidentiality are related to safety. Confidentiality must be broken when the student discloses an intention to cause harm to self or to others; or when the student reports neglect, or physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.
 - As mentioned in the action plan, when voicing concern, educators are expected to inform students of the limits of confidentiality.
- C. Remind educators that their job is to voice concern and to access resources, not to diagnose or act as a mental health professional. If applicable, discuss or point out specific school- or district-wide policies that may limit an educator's involvement.

SLIDE III-D

III-6 Closing

- A. Summarize major points of the module, referring to objectives.
- B. Ask for comments and questions.
- C. Ask participants to complete evaluation form.



MODULE III: TRAINER PREPARATION NOTES

III-1 Introduction

Background. In Module III, your role is to help participants recognize and know how to access resources in their own school and community. It is important to be aware of local resources before the training begins. Use Handout III-C to help you consider what resources are available. This knowledge will help facilitate participant discussion.

Overview. Module III is different from the other modules in that it is school- and community-specific. This module uses a case study to help participants devise an action plan based on the resources in their own school and community. Participants should think as they read the case study about how they might take action to meet the student's needs and help her succeed.

III-2 Action Plan: Know What Resources Are Available

Resources and policies. Resources identified should include not only partners, but also policies, specifically existing school programs related to mental health. Your school may employ such methods as functional behavior assessment or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). See the Resource List, included as an appendix to this training, for more information.

III-4 Action Plan: Follow Up

Continued involvement. It is important to stress that helping students isn't about shifting the problem to someone else. Following up reassures youth that you are someone who DOES care. The information on Handout III-A (Action Plan) provides some ideas for continued involvement:

- Work with the youth and others involved to intervene at the level of the classroom. Make modifications where necessary to promote successful learning.
- Refrain from public statements that will violate the youth's privacy and confidentiality.
- Obtain support from internal resources to ensure that classroom modifications are appropriate and monitor whether adaptations are working for the youth.
- Check with internal resources to ensure that help is being accessed.

The idea of continued and individualized involvement by teachers and other community partners is the basis of the Systems of Care approach. In

MODULE III: TRAINER PREPARATION NOTES

a system of care, mental health, education, child welfare, juvenile justice, and other agencies work together to ensure that children with mental, emotional, and behavioral problems and their families have access to the services and supports they need to succeed.¹ For more information on this and other forms of intervention, please see the Resource List included as an appendix to this training.

III-5 Confidentiality and the Limits of Educator Involvement

Additional information on confidentiality. Confidentiality is a promise of trust to safeguard personal and private information that is shared openly, either through written, spoken, or another form of communication. The purpose of confidentiality is to honor an individual's right to privacy and to show respect for the vulnerability that underlies the process of sharing private information.

Confidentiality must be broken when the student discloses an intention to cause harm to him/herself or to others; or when the student reports neglect or physical, sexual, or psychological abuse.

NOTE: Suspicion of abuse is justification to break privacy. All teachers are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse.

¹ Systems of Care—A Promising Solution for Children With Serious Emotional Disturbances and Their Families. Center for Mental Health Services, www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/publications/allpubs/CA-0030/default.asp